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Security Council

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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 7473rd meeting of the Security Council, held on 26 June 2015, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Burundi", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council reiterates its deep concern regarding the grave security and political situation in Burundi against the backdrop of the forthcoming, communal, presidential and senatorial elections and for the impact of the crisis in the region. The Security Council strongly condemns all acts of violence and human rights violations and abuses and recalls that those responsible for such violence should be held accountable and brought to justice.

"The Security Council welcomes the regional and sub-regional efforts aimed at addressing the crisis, and in this regard takes note of the conclusions of the East African Community (EAC) summits held on 13 May and 31 May 2015 in Dar-es-Salaam, of the communiqué issued by the African Union Peace and Security Council (AU PSC) after its Summit held on 13 June 2015 in Johannesburg, South Africa, and of the letters sent by the Government of Burundi to the Security Council.

"The Security Council pays tribute to the relentless efforts of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General (SESG) for the Great Lakes Region, Saïd Djinnit and recalls that Burundian stakeholders had made some progress in a difficult dialogue thanks to SESG Djinnit's able facilitation.

"The Security Council takes note of the African Union's statement that the political dialogue has not produced expected results and that the current situation could jeopardize the important gains recorded following the signing of the Arusha Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Burundi and the Global Ceasefire agreement of 2003, and affect the stability of the region.

"The Security Council welcomes the resumption of the dialogue between all the Burundian parties, under the facilitation of the AU, the UN, the EAC and the ICGLR. In this regard, the Security Council welcomes the appointment of Professor Ibrahima Fall by the AU, as the new Special Representative of the chairperson of the Commission for the Great Lakes region and Head of the AU Liaison office in Bujumbura. The Security Council also welcomes the arrival in Bujumbura of United Nations SRSG for Central Africa and Head of UNOCA, Abdoulaye Bathily, which allows for the international mediation to

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immediately assist all Burundian parties to expedite the search for a consensual political solution to the crisis.

"While acknowledging that further steps must continue to be taken by parties to adhere to the decisions taken by the EAC and the AU PSC, the Council calls on the Burundian parties to urgently participate in an inclusive dialogue which should focus, in the spirit of the Arusha Agreements, and the Constitution, on the measures to be taken to create conditions conducive to the organization of free, fair, transparent and credible elections.

"The Council takes note of the statement in the AU PSC Communiqué of 13 June that the date of the election should be set by consensus between the Burundian parties, in the spirit of the EAC's communiqué of 31 May 2015 requesting a postponement of the elections, and on the basis of a technical assessment to be undertaken by the United Nations.

"The Security Council emphasizes that the dialogue should address all matters on which the parties disagree. The Security Council further emphasizes that this dialogue should address concerns related to the reinstatement of private media; the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, in particular freedoms of expression and of peaceful assembly, including for members of the political opposition to campaign freely, as guaranteed by the Constitution of Burundi; the release of those arbitrarily detained following demonstrations; the respect for the rule of the law; and the urgent disarmament of all armed youth groups allied with political parties, as reflected in the conditions of the EAC communiqué of 31 May 2015, conditions to be met prior to the holding of elections.

"The Security Council welcomes the commitment of the AU and the Chairperson of the AU Commission to fully assume the responsibilities stemming from its role as Guarantor of the Arusha Agreement, as well as that of the region not to stand-by in case the situation deteriorates.

"In this regard, the Security Council welcomes the decision of the AU to immediately deploy human rights observers and other civilian personnel; to deploy AU military experts to verify the process of disarming of all armed youth groups allied with political parties, which will submit regular reports on the implementation of the disarmament process, and to deploy an AU election observer mission if conditions for the organization of free, fair, transparent and credible elections are met. The Council urges the Government of Burundi and other relevant actors to extend their full cooperation to these processes.

"The Security Council also welcomes the AU PSC's decision to send, by the first week of July, a ministerial delegation including the Commission, to assess the implementation of the conditions required by EAC, the AU and the Council for the holding of the elections.

"The Council calls on the Electoral Mission of the United Nations in Burundi (MENUB) to fully and actively pursue the implementation of its mandate in accordance with Resolution 2137 (2014) including to swiftly report to the Security Council before, during and after the elections.

"The Security Council reiterates its concern about the difficult situation of the Burundian refugees who fled their country into the neighboring States,

commends the host countries (Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Tanzania), as well as humanitarian agencies, for their support to the affected populations, and calls upon the international community to provide the necessary humanitarian assistance. The Council urges the Government of Burundi to create the conditions conducive to their early return.

"The Security Council calls on all actors in the region the preserve the safety and security of populations in the region."